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things of beauty, the wild flowers which will be cut down. There is not enough of abstract charm in the picture.

Another serious composition was "The Last Shadow of the Cross," by George Inness, Jr. It represents the burial of Christ. The red glow of evening falls upon a mass of rock, one corner of which is black with the entrance to the tomb. It kindles the white draperies of the three Maries and the wrappings of the corpse, which is being borne to its rest by two men, while a third stands by superintending the interment. Although two of them stand with their backs to us, the individual characterization is felt in all three; their posing, too, is excellent, and the weight and lifelessness of their burden beautifully expressed. There is a little affectation, however, in the grouping of the women, and the Magdalen is very insipid in appearance. But the general feeling of the picture is a very satisfactory blending of pathos and peace.

In "Thoughts of Youth," Douglas Volk once more harps upon the mystery of the pine woods. This time it is a little boy with a sweet, wistful face. The blue overalls that he wears make a very pleasant contrast to the greens and browns and pinks of the foliage. His legs and feet are bare, and these, with the hands and face, are placed most effectively in the picture, and their smoothness is in pleasant contrast with the wild surroundings. "Oceanides," by George W. Maynard, is one of the sprightliest of his mermaid series, both in movement and color. "Returning from the Marsh," by O. C. Wigand, with its fresh coloring and simple sentiment, was one of the attractive pictures, as also, in quite a different way, were S. W. Van Schaik's "The Studio Lunch" and Walter Shirlaw's "Bacchanals."

From bears and chafing-dishes to a Madonna and angels is a far cry and a welcome one. In this last picture F. S. Church at least shows how beautifully he can express tenderness and wistful yearning. The purity of the conception, revealed as much in the delicate fancy of the color scheme as in the pose and face of the central figure is admirable. It is not strong work, or deep in meaning, and has more than a little prettiness of affectation, but it is gracious.

Two stirring subjects were Frederic Remington's "Missing," a cavalrymen being led off captive by a band of mounted Indians, and

another Indian scene, "In Full Retreat," by De Cost Smith.

Among the landscapes none was more pleasing than C. Harry Eaton's "Midsummer Evening," and none stronger than A. T. Van Laer's "Wet Day—Pennsylvania." Another notable canvas was "The Plow Horse," by Carleton Wiggins, with its mellow sky, loamy furrows and dark trees, and the light so managed that it made the white horse the one bright spot in the low-toned composition. By Irving R. Wiles was "The North Shore," with a curving line of grey sand, grass and yellow flowers in the foreground: very charming; by Charles Warren Eaton a "Moonrise"; by Robert C. Minor "The End of Summer"; "Mount Pakatak," by Arthur Parton; "An Ohio Sunset," by Silas S. Dustin; "At Low Tide," by Jules R. Mersfelder, and a dainty little "Springtime," by C. Appleton Brown. Mention must also be made of "Twilight," by L. de Forest, and Walter Clark's "Brandywine Meadows." Prominent amongst the sculpture were a bronze bust of "Peary, the Explorer," by William Ordway Partridge, very vigorous and picturesque, and an idealized head of "Peace," by the same sculptor; a working model of Burns, by J. Massey Rhind, and a "Family Group," in low relief, by J. S. Hartley.



TEN AMERICAN PAINTERS

MANY visitors to the little exhibition of pictures held last month at the Durand-Ruel galleries, by the "Ten American Painters," must have been impressed with its simplicity. It was in the best sense artistic: reticent, select and choice. "*Simplex munditiis*" might have been written over the entrance. In these days of superlativeness and exaggerated sensation, to step out of Fifth avenue into this quiet little room, whose walls were lined with white cheesecloth and floor covered with straw mats, and to sit in tranquil companionship with the small gathering of canvases—twenty-three in all—was like happening upon an oasis in the desert. There were peace and refreshment and a certain little fountain of fresh, pure feeling. You may find the feeling elsewhere, but not in

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such uninterrupted quietude; which no doubt is why the Ten hold their exhibition separately. They get what they crave, a thoroughly artistic environment, and what an object lesson they give! Modesty is the keynote, but these men are not modest; reticence and reserve are felt, but these friends of ours are personally assertive. We like them for it. But they are artists, and know that there is infinitely more assertion in a gracious inclination than in the proudly carried head. Similar motive was echoed in the pictures; a personal assertion very evident, but expressed with a delicacy of refinement and discovering itself in a subtle and spiritual direction; in a word, and at risk of repetition, thoroughly artistic.

There were exceptions, it is true. Two of Joseph R. Decamp's pictures, "Girl Sleeping" and "The Looking-Glass," were quite ordinary in motive and method. The former was merely the study of a nude, splashed rather coarsely with light and shade: just a studio study, with nothing in drawing or color to lift it above dozens of such things. The other subject, of a girl sitting with her back to the spectator, while her face appears in a mirror, was unfortunate in color and arrangement, with nothing to compensate for lack of imagination in the motive. It was different, however, with the picture called "Girl Drying Her Hair." This is simply the back view of a nude, seen in clear, even light; but it is so beautifully modeled, the flesh coloring so true, and, better still, the composition and color have such an abstract charm, that the canvas is very pleasing. It is an excellent example of the nude, treated not merely as such, but for the opportunity it gives of beautiful expression.

There were studies of the nude by Childe Hassam also: one of a slender figure, which made an uncompromising series of right angles, as it sat on a bank in a wood, suggesting the pose seen in Egyptian temples. One tries to find the painter's point of view, but it is difficult. There is a beauty, we know, in arrowy straightness, but surely it should suggest the possibility also of yield. Slimness may be agreeable, but we ask that it be willowy. Form, too, will be more acceptable if it suggests the framework beneath, and the flesh is robbed of half its beauty when it is made only a surface for reflecting light. No one will

suspect Mr. Hassam of a love of asceticism. Is it then the staleness of custom that has lessened his appreciation of the nude, or merely narrowness of vision, which contracts upon some one phase of the matter, or is it that not uncommon mistake of trying to get spirituality through elimination of the physical charms? We suspect it is deliberate narrowness of motive, for in his picture of "Morning Mist," where three women are sitting on the beach, and bright warm haze is hanging round them and basking on the sea, the foreground is scamped. The mist is beautifully rendered. One cannot too highly praise the indefinable delicacy or the subtlety of tender coloring; yet the rocks are put in with a disregard of truth, and, for the matter of that, of beauty, which jars upon the rest of the picture. It may be unreasonable to expect a painter to carry every part of his picture equally far, but the failure to solve his problem completely should not be allowed to interfere with the main motive, which in this case is the infinite tenderness of morning, and this foreground is harsh. But through the fine web of Mr. Hassam's fancy there is a streak or two of coarse thread. One feels it again in his little picture of two Brittany women, sitting "In the Sun." Their faces are flaming with red and yellow. It is very clever, but ruthless. His most agreeable canvas was "Rome: from the Spanish Stairs," with its broad band of hot, transparent shadow and the still, sweltering sunshine beyond. Here he was at his best and it was very good.

E. C. Tarbell was not at his best in this exhibition. There was only one little example, scarcely more than a sketch, called "The White Dress." It might just as well have been called "The Studio Floor," for three-quarters of the picture represented its polished surface, reflecting a little light that came in between the closed slats of the blind. At the top of the canvas was a sofa with a lady reclining upon it in a white dress. The picture had no more weight than a puff of thistle-down, but, it is only fair to say, it was quite as dainty.

There were four landscapes by J. H. Twachtman. He had hung "Morning" in the centre, apparently giving it the place of honor. At any rate, it attracted most approval from visitors, and not surprisingly, for it was very beautiful. Just a placid stream,

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with one bank covered with a wood, the other dotted with trees and bushes; but the whole was wrapt in early morning mist, giving a dainty radiance and spirituality. Really it is seldom that one sees a picture which so inevitably suggests that word spirituality. It was not so much morning that was expressed as its very soul; not so much what morning is as what in rare moments we feel it to be: the Greek incarnation of Eos resolved again into her elements, and thereby the more spiritual. The same subtle discrimination of values was attempted in "Winter," but less happily. There was a homelier feeling in the cottages, huddling beneath the rolling banks of snow, which scarcely lent itself to such refinement of expression, and the effect was a trifle heavy and apathetic. One felt something of the same in "The Brook." It lacked vivacity; but the picture of "My House," a sunlit white porch surrounded with greenery, was as glad-some and spontaneous as could be.

Frank W. Benson sent one example, "In the Woods," a study of his little girl and boy, sitting among the pine trees. The hush of the forest has crept into their hearts: they are very still, perhaps a little awed. So the figures are in a remarkable degree parts of one motive. The uniformity of feeling throughout the whole picture is admirable. The treatment is equally harmonious. While the fresh child-life, so full of possibilities, is the accent of the picture, it is not unduly detached from the surroundings. The subject is a single conception, and everything within the frame is contributory.

A single example is also shown by T. W. Dewing: the portrait of a young lady in an old-rose gown, sitting in a chair upholstered in yellow. She holds a glass bowl upon her lap, the iridescence of which forms the nucleus of a web of tender colors woven over the whole canvas. The face is in warm shadow; its quiet intensity giving emphasis to the deeper feeling which underlies the surface-play of the picture's coloring. We are often told that only women can know enough of their sex to interpret it correctly. This must be true so far as concerns experiences and motives; the facts of femininity. But when it comes to idealizing, to extracting the essence and setting forth the subtle fragrance, man proves himself the better artist. What woman

has ever written anything on "Maidenhood" comparable to Longfellow's lines:

"Standing with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!

Gazing with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance
On the river's broad expanse!

Deep and still, that gliding stream,
Beautiful to thee must seem
As the river of a dream."

Equally, we have still to wait for a woman-artist who can express this conception in form and color as admirably as Mr. Dewing has done in this particular portrait. And, as we know, his art is not limited to the expression of girlhood. His portraits of older women similarly embody the essential fragrance of the sex. Of course, the problem-novel is quite another matter. If woman is to be dissected and the penetralia of her heart and mind to be laid bare, it may be as well to leave it to practitioners of her own sex. But is this art? To which the "doubting Pilate" of to-day retorts "What is art?" and does not wait for an answer. And, truly, if he is a busy man, there is some excuse; for its manifestations are so diverse and contradictory that it is hard to fix the answer.

For example, in this exhibition there is a portrait of a mother and child, by J. Alden Weir. It is pretty safe to say that while every man or woman who looks at the portrait by Mr. Dewing will in a greater or less degree realize its beauty at once, they will find Mr. Weir's difficult of acceptance at first sight. Yet there is no question that he is an artist, whose art is of a most refined character. Then why, not by any means for the first time, has he mingled the beauty of his picture with so much that is unattractive: the pose of the two figures, for example, the lady's dress, and still more the flat, unanimated treatment of the child's face? Is the feeling at the back of his intention so precious that he interjects these things as barriers to keep off the too rude stare? Perhaps it may be the result of a leaning towards the old Italians of the fourteenth century, Giotto for instance, with his noble simplicity and childlike, unconscious dignity. But in a modern it cannot be unconscious; it fits incongruously with his method of brush-work, more especially in the case of this

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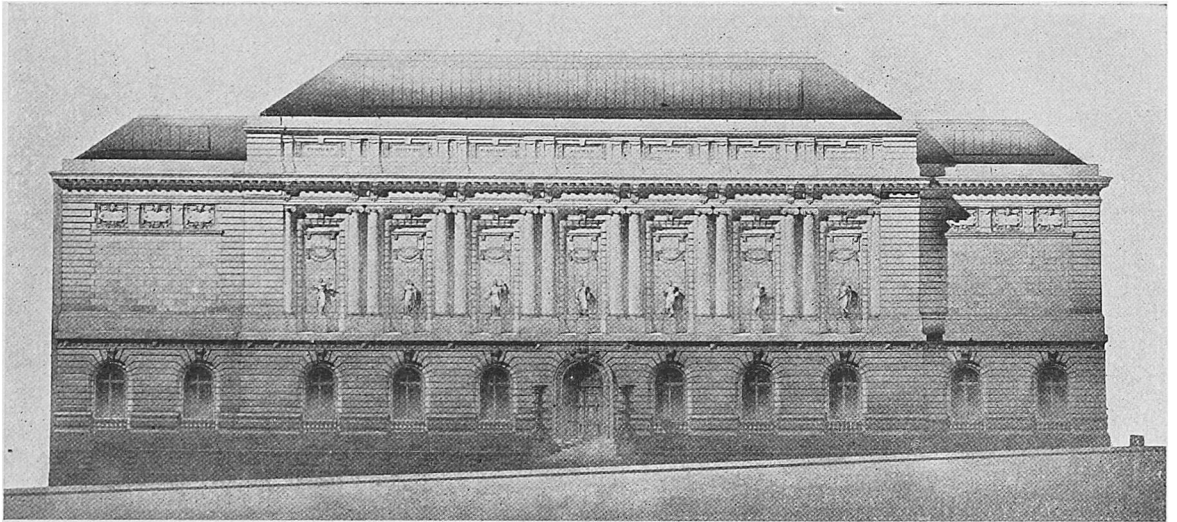
painter, with his subtle treatment of color, and lies upon the surface like an affectation. That it is not one is very clear; posturing would be quite alien to the sincerity of Mr. Weir. Its motive is much more probably akin to that corresponding movement in literature—in American literature, particularly—which finds no subject too homely and humdrum for artistic treatment; which finds its pleasure in the patient analysis of what is at first sight unattractive, and its triumph in evoking for it the interest of the reader. From this the transition is easy to a preference for homely subjects, and finally to a deliberate forcing forward of the homeliness in sheer triumph of proving what may be done with it to make it interesting. However, by the time this point is reached, there is a touch of morbidity in the motive; and, beginning with art for art's sake, it has become didactic art, art with a moral: the last thing in the world probably that its author desires it to be.

Another portrait by Mr. Weir, of a lady sitting on a settee, was much more readily acceptable, though there was a curious mannerism in the drawing of the eyes and mouth. Taken with the other portrait, it shows that part of the motive has been to make the canvas a handsome piece of polychrome embroidery, in which the figure and the background participate, practically upon the same plane. There was a very fascinating study of a woman's face and shoulders in lambent shadow, entitled "The Flower," and a fine landscape, representing a "New England Ploughman." The latter is a vigorous arrangement of browns, greens and blue; oxen and ploughman halting for a moment in the dull red furrow, while a little child sits near, eagerly at work upon her play—the arranging in a ring of some of the too numerous stones. What an excellent synthetizing of the essential features of the subject, and how poetically expressed. It is equally so in the treatment. There is a vividness in the coloring, a rugged suggestion underlying it and withal a sprightliness in the atmosphere: a small picture with great breadth and depth of feeling.

Three examples were shown by Robert Reid of some of his later work, which was noticed in THE ARTIST last month. They were "Azaleas," "The Canna," and "Fleur de Lys." Each, as we said, represents a female figure surrounded by flowers and foliage,

and the painter's purpose has been not only to produce a decorative panel, but to give it emotional expression. The note of "The Canna" is gladness of life: carried through the sunlit orchard, the radiant figure of the girl and the gorgeous scarlet of the flowers. Maiden wistfulness may be the theme of "Azaleas," and memories of "Fleur de Lys." But these sub-titles we put forward merely as hints of the direction in which the painter's thought has worked. They are neither final nor conclusive. If they were, the merit of these pictures would be less. The virtue of the latter is that they are abstractions which stimulate diverse imaginations differently. The analogy between flowers and womankind and between flowers and moods of emotion is not a new one, nor is it exhausted. The making it part of a decorative scheme is a very interesting departure. These pictures also mark a new departure in Mr. Reid's decorative methods. They reveal more reliance upon color than his earlier work; color, that is to say, which has some meaning and value of its own, and shall be manipulated like the keys of a piano, not merely set out in unsuggestive juxtaposition, like the patterns upon cretonne. It would be unfair to him to disguise the fact that his efforts are still in the tentative stage. The theme, while clear enough, is apt to be over-elaborated, to the loss of artistic unity. Metaphor apart, there are too many brush-strokes, indiscriminately applied, as in "Fleur de Lys," so that there is a lack of subordination in the parts of the picture and an absence of a controlling emphasis anywhere. In "Azaleas," on the other hand, there is an over accentuation of the figure or a want of assertion in the flowers and foliage. The balance in "The Canna" is far more satisfactory, though more simplicity in the background would have increased the nobility of the picture. Those suggestions are founded upon the assumption that one purpose of these canvases is distinctly decorative, and in decoration balance is so important, and one way of securing it is by simple particularization of all the parts, so that each has a definite and certain share in the *ensemble*.

Edward Simmons showed a portrait and a picture called "Morning." The former represented a college professor in his black gown, with a strong-featured, kindly face and light



PROPOSED NEW BUILDING FOR THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN

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hair and beard. The figure was seated in a grey and drab interior, painted very simply but with much refinement and excellent suggestion of atmosphere. The noticeable characteristic of the picture was the intellectual sympathy between the painter and the sitter. The subject was dignified and the method likewise, and the gracious impressiveness of the whole apparently unlabored. The other picture, "Morning," involved a very agreeable study of flesh tints and white, set in a rich background of low-toned colors.

Willard L. Metcalf was the only member of the Ten American Painters who did not contribute to this very interesting exhibition.



THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN: A RETROSPECT

THE approaching transfer of the Academy schools to temporary quarters on Cathedral Boulevard, and the commencement of the principal façade of the new Academy buildings upon the same site, have given occasion for a very interesting historical sketch, by Daniel Huntington, N. A., from which the following is extracted:

The first step in the founding of an Academy of Art was taken by a few citizens of New York in 1802. Their names were Edward Liv-

ingston, Colonel William Smith, Dr. Joseph Brown, John B. Prevost, William Cutting, William M. Seton, and Stephen Van Rensselaer. They chose Edward Livingston as president. He was United States District Attorney, and Mayor of New York at the time the City Hall was built. The secretary was Dr. Peter Irving, an elder brother of Washington Irving, and editor of the *Morning Chronicle*. They adopted the title of "The New York Academy of Fine Arts." They proposed to issue 500 shares, at \$100 each. In 1808 they obtained a charter with a name changed from "The New York" to "The American Academy of Arts." The first officers under the charter were men of fame in this city: Robert R. Livingston, president; John Trumbull, vice-president; DeWitt Clinton, Dr. David Hosack, John R. Murray, William Cutting, and Charles Wilkes, directors. Trumbull was the only artist in the direction. A few years previously a collection of casts had been bought in Paris for this Society by Robert R. Livingston, then our Ambassador to France, the cost of which seriously crippled the treasury of the infant Academy. An exhibition of these casts was held in a vacant riding school in Greenwich street, near the Battery, then the centre of the highest fashion. Five dollars was charged for a season ticket, but the gay public swarmed past for their promenade on the Battery, leaving the mighty Greek masters to a handful of curious students. For several years afterward this col-